



State Board of Equalization

News Release

Vice Chair Michelle Steel

3rd District – Rolling Hills Estates

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www.boe.ca.gov

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2012 Annual Taxpayers' Bill of Rights Hearings Held in Culver City, Sacramento

Individuals and businesses with ideas or concerns about the administration and oversight of California's business and property taxes are invited to attend the Board of Equalization's (BOE) annual Taxpayers' Bill of Rights hearings in Culver City on April 24 and in Sacramento on June 26, BOE Vice Chair Michelle Steel announced today.

In addition to safeguarding the rights, privacy, and property of taxpayers, Vice Chair Steel is interested in discussing ways to help taxpayers better understand California's tax laws.

"Taxpayers have a fundamental right to have their views and concerns heard by the government," said Steel. "These hearings enable California taxpayers to come before the Board with comments on issues related to the business and property taxes laws administered or overseen by the BOE, including environmental fees, sales and use, fuel, excise, and property taxes."

The Taxpayers' Bill of Rights hearings will each begin at approximately 1:30 p.m. at the following two locations:

Tuesday April 24, 2012	Board of Equalization District Office 5901 Green Valley Circle, Suite 207 Culver City, CA 90230
Tuesday June 26, 2011	Board of Equalization Headquarters Building 1st Floor Board Room, Room 121 450 N Street Sacramento , CA 95814

Each of the Taxpayers' Bill of Rights public hearings will also be streamed live at www.boe.ca.gov.

Taxpayers interested in making a presentation at the Taxpayers' Bill of Rights Hearings are invited to contact the BOE Taxpayers' Rights Advocate Office by calling toll-free 888-324-2798, or by email at www.boe.ca.gov/info/emailtra.htm.

More information about the annual hearings is available online at www.boe.ca.gov/meetings/heartra.htm.

Enacted in January 1989, the Harris-Katz California Taxpayers' Bill of Rights requires that the BOE ensure that the rights of California taxpayers are protected during the assessment and collection of sales and use taxes. The Taxpayers' Bill of Rights was expanded in 1993 to include special tax programs such as excise, fuel, and alcohol taxes, and the Morgan Property Taxpayers' Bill of Rights was added in 1994. The BOE is required by law to conduct public Bill of Rights hearings annually.

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Elected to the Board of Equalization in 2006 and re-elected in 2010, Michelle Steel serves as *Southern California's elected taxpayer advocate*. In December 2007, Steel discovered the Board of Equalization had delayed the return of millions of dollars in security deposits owed to California businesses. Procedures were changed due to Steel's decisive leadership. Following her investigation, the tax agency refunded tax security deposits to over 5,500 small businesses. To date, over \$100 million in security deposits have been returned to taxpayers.

The five-member California State Board of Equalization (BOE) is a publicly elected tax board. The BOE collects more than \$50 billion annually in taxes and fees supporting state and local government services. It hears business tax appeals, acts as the appellate body for franchise and personal income tax appeals, and serves a significant role in the assessment and administration of property taxes. For more information on other taxes and fees in California, visit www.taxes.ca.gov.

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